

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 IGA-02 TRSE-00 OMB-01 EB-08
L-03 MC-02 NEA-10 EUR-12 DHA-02 ACDA-07 /091 W
-----201828Z 029165 /42

R 201657Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5636
INFO USCINCSO
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 GUATEMALA 2381

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, GT, US
SUBJ: IMPACT OF TERMINATION OF US SECURITY ASSISTANCE TO
GUATEMALA

REF: GUATEMALA 1584

1. SUMMARY. IF GUATEMALA STICKS TO ITS DECISION TO END US
MILITARY ASSISTANCE ON SEPTEMBER 30, NEAR-TERM TECHNICAL
CONSEQUENCES WILL HIT HARDEST ON THE GUATEMALAN AIR FORCE,
LESS HARD ON THE NAVY, AND LEAST ON THE MOST IMPORTANT FORCE,
THE ARMY. OVER THE LONGER HAUL, ALL SERVICES WILL FEEL
KEENLY THE LOSS OF MID-CAREER EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AT
US MILITARY SCHOOLS. POLITICALLY, EFFECT WILL BE LIMITED
BECAUSE TERMINATION OF ASSISTANCE WILL BE CONSISTENT WITH THE

CUTTING OF UNBILICAL CORD BETWEEN US AND GUATEMALAN ARMIES
THAT HAS ALREADY TAKEN PLACE. BUT TERMINATION IS ANOTHER IN
A STEADILY ACCUMULATING LIST OF IRRITANTS THAT HAVE WORSENERD
NOT ONLY MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS BUT BROADER US-GUATEMALAN
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RELATIONS. LONG-TERM EFFECT DEPENDS TO SOME DEGREE, ON
POSSIBILITY OF OTHER CHANGES IN GUATEMALAN SOCIETY.
END SUMMARY.

2. EMBASSY IS REPORTING BY SEPTTEL THAT GOG INTENTIONS CONCERN-
ING US SECURITY ASSISTANCE ARE STILL UNCLEAR, PARTICULARLY AS
REGARDS FMS CASH SALES. GRANT MATERIEL AID HAD OF COURSE

ALREADY BEEN TERMINATED AND FMS CREDIT FOR GUATEMALA IN RECENT YEARS (AN AVERAGE OF \$1.4 MILLION A YEAR SINCE FY 1970) HAS NOT BEEN SIGNIFICANT IN TERMS OF TOTAL GOG EXPENDITURES FOR MILITARY MATERIEL AND SERVICES. GUATEMALA IS DOING VERY WELL ECONOMICALLY AND IS LIKELY TO DO EVEN BETTER AS NICKEL EXPORTS AND A SMALL PETROLEUM OUTPUT COME ONSTREAM. THE DILEMMA THAT WILL CONFRONT THE ARMED FORCES IS NOT ECONOMIC BUT RATHER WHETHER TO WITHDRAW FROM A SYSTEM THAT PROVIDES ACCESS TO A BROAD RANGE OF SPARE PARTS FOR US ORIGIN EQUIPMENT. THE AIR FORCE IN PARTICULAR WILL BE SEVERELY AFFECTED IF THE GOG DOES DECIDE TO WITHDRAW.

3. GUATEMALA HAS PUT UP A \$510,000 DEPOSIT TO "BUY INTO" THE USAF SUPPLY SYSTEM UNDER A SUPPLY SUPPORT AGREEMENT (SSA) FOR A-37/C-47 AIRCRAFT PARTS. THE AGREEMENT WAS RECENTLY ACTIVATED AND THE GOG CAN NOW BEGIN TO PURCHASE AGAINST IT. THIS IS ALMOST SOLE SOURCE OF BROAD RANGE SUPPORT FOR THESE AIRCRAFT. CANCELLATION OF THIS SSA COULD LEAD TO THE EARLY GROUNDING OF THE 11 PLANE ATTACK SQUADRON AND REDUCED OPERATIONAL CAPABILITY FOR THE TRANSPORT SQUADRON. A SIMILAR AGREEMENT FOR SUPPORT OF UH-1H HELICOPTER FLEET IS BEING PROCESSED.

4. WE UNDERSTAND THAT DOD IS PREPARED TO ISSUE IN LATE APRIL A LETTER OF OFFER TO GUATEMALA FOR 6 UH-1 (HUEY) HELICOPTERS, SIMILAR TO THE 9 NOW IN THEIR FLEET. THIS IS PROBABLY THE NUMBER ONE ITEM ON THEIR WANT LIST. USG HAS ALSO EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS TO SELL THE GOG AN A-37 JET FROM NEW CESSNA PRODUCTION FOR DELIVERY IN FY 79. THAT PROBABLY ENJOYS SECOND PRIORITY ON THE GUATEMALAN WANT LIST.
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5. IN THE IMET AREA, THE AIR FORCE (GAF) IS HEAVILY DEPENDENT UPON US SCHOOLS. FOR EXAMPLE, OF 49 SPACES PROGRAMMED FOR TECHNICAL AND MAINTENANCE TRAINING IN FY 77, 41 ARE FOR THE GAF, ALL AT THE INTER-AMERICAN AIR FORCES ACADEMY IN THE CANAL ZONE. THE GAF HAS SUCCESSFULLY SOUGHT SCHOLARSHIPS FOR BASIC FIXED WING PILOT TRAINING IN VARIOUS SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRIES. HOWEVER, CURTAILMENT OF BASIC AND ADVANCED HELICOPTER PILOT TRAINING, NOW RECEIVED ONLY IN THE CONUS, WILL PRESENT TO THEM A PARTICULAR PROBLEM WITH NO APPARENT ALTERNATE SOLUTION IN SIGHT.

6. LOSS OF THE CONSIDERABLE ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO THE NAVY BY US MOBILE AND TECHNICAL TRAINING TEAMS, PRIMARILY FROM THE CANAL ZONE, WILL ADVERSELY AFFECT THE EFFORT TO INTEGRATE THE NEW US PATROL BOATS INTO THE FLEET AND TO COPE WITH EXPANDED MAINTENANCE AND SUPPLY PROBLEMS.

7. IMPACT ON THE ARMY - BY FAR THE MOST IMPORTANT SERVICE

BOTH IN NUMBERS AND IN POLITICAL AND MILITARY SIGNIFICANCE -
WILL BE MUCH LESS SEVERE. THE ARMY OBVIOUSLY HAS LESS OF A
TECHNICAL AND MAINTENANCE PROBLEM THAN THE OTHER TWO SERVICES,
AND ITS EQUIPMENT IS INCREASINGLY OF NON-US ORIGIN. BECAUSE
OF DELAYS IN THE DELIVERY OF EQUIPMENT AND AMMUNITION ORDERED
FROM THE US IN 1975, THE GOG DECIDED TO REPLACE THE ARMY'S
US M-1 RIFLES WITH ISRAELI GALILS AND IT IS PRESENTLY
ARRANGING AMMUNITION SUPPLY FOR THEM FROM WEST EUROPEAN SOURCES.
GIVEN GUATEMALA'S FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND THE ARMY'S NUMBER
ONE PRIORITY IN ACCESS TO THEM, THE TASK OF SIMILARLY
REPLACING OTHER US EQUIPMENT WITH THIRD COUNTRY OR US COMMERCIAL
PRODUCTS MAY BE EXPENSIVE BUT SHOULD NOT IN MOST CASES BE
DIFFICULT. A LARGE AMMUNITION ORDER, INCLUDING MUCH DESIRED
HOWITZER AMMUNITION, IS BEING ASSEMBLED FOR SHIPMENT ON THE
NEXT VOYAGE OF THE USNS AMMUNITION SHIP "MIRFAK", AND WILL
PRESUMABLY BE ACCEPTED BY GUATEMALA AS IT REPRESENTS PRE-
HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT ORDERS. THAT ORDER WILL SUPPLY THEIR
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NEEDS IN SEVERAL AREAS UNTIL ALTERNATE SOURCES OF SUPPLY CAN
BE ARRANGED.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 GUATEMALA 2381

8. ALL SERVICES WILL FEEL KEENLY THE LOSS OF MID-CAREER PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES AT THE US ADVANCED BRANCH AND COMMAND AD STAFF COURSES. THE PRESIDENT AND ALMOST EVERY SENIOR OFFICER ARE GRADUATES OF THESE COURSES, AND THE PRESIDENT STILL PROUDLY WEARS HIS LEAVENWORTH PATCH. GUATEMALA, UNLIKE SOME OF THE OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES THAT PROTESTED THE HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTS, DID NOT WITHDRAW ANY OF ITS STUDENTS FROM US SCHOOLS. BUT IF IT REFUSES TO SEND ANY NEW ONES, THE ARMED FORCES WILL FACE A DECLINE IN THE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF OFFICERS AND LOSS OF THE STANDARD WHICH HAS GUIDED THEM IN DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR OWN MILITARY EDUCATION SYSTEM. THERE WILL BE A SEARCH FOR SCHOLARSHIPS IN SOUTH AMERICA AND EUROPE, BUT WE THINK THE GENERAL STAFF WILL ARGUE WITHIN THE GOG TO LIMIT THE TERMINATION TO FMS CREDIT AND TO CONTINUE WITH CASH PURCHASES AND SOME IMET. THE POLITICAL DECISION MAKERS MAY FIND SUCH A STAND UNACCEPTABLE SINCE ANY SUCH INCLINATION RUNS SQUARELY INTO THE FACT THAT THERE WOULD BE A SECOND HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT ON GUATEMALA IN EARLY 1978. CONFIDENTIAL

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9. IF TRAINING IS TERMINATED, ALL OF THE POLITICAL EFFECTS WOULD NOT BE IMMEDIATE, AS THE ARMY WOULD CONTINUE TO BE LED FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS BY US-TRAINED OFFICERS. EVENTUALLY, HOWEVER, THE ARMY WOULD HAVE A MARKEDLY DIFFERENT ORIENTATION - BUT PRECISELY WHAT KIND OF ORIENTATION IT IS DIFFICULT TO SAY. GIVEN THE ECONOMIES OF SCALE INVOLVED, A COMPLETELY SELF-SUFFICIENT TRAINING AND EDUCATION BASE IS NOT IN THE CARDS. EITHER THE QUALITY OF TRAINING WILL DECLINE OR OPPORTUNITIES WILL BE SOUGHT ELSEWHERE. GUATEMALA WILL PROBABLY LOOK FIRST TO THE ESTABLISHED MILITARY INSTITUTIONS OF SOUTH AMERICA, THEN TO SPAIN AND OTHER EUROPEAN POSSIBILITIES. THERE IS GREAT ADMIRATION FOR ISRAEL HERE THAT WILL BE STRENGTHENED BY THE NEW EQUIPMENT LINK.

10. HOW SIGNIFICANT THIS MAY BE POLITICALLY DEPENDS ON WHAT POLITICAL ROLE THE GUATEMALAN ARMY WILL PLAY. THE FORMAL TERMINATION OF US ASSISTANCE WILL HAVE LITTLE IMMEDIATE IMPACT BECAUSE THE UMBILICAL CORD HAS ALREADY BEEN LARGELY SEVERED. THE US ITSELF HAD SHARPLY REDUCED ITS SECURITY ASSISTANCE TO GUATEMALA FROM THE LEVELS OF THE LATE 1960'S AND EARLY 1970'S, WHEN COUNTER-INSURGENCY WAS AT ITS HEIGHT. THEN THE BELIZE CRISIS OF 1975 AND THE US DECISION TO DELAY DELIVERY OF SOME ASSISTANCE REQUESTS BECAUSE OF THEIR POSSIBLE USE AGAINST BELIZE CAUSED THE GOG TO DECIDE - MORE FIRMLY AND SHARPLY THAN WE REALIZED AT THE TIME - THAT THE US WAS AN UNRELIABLE

SUPPLIER. COMPLETELY APART FROM THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE, GUATEMALA WAS ALREADY IN THE PROCESS OF SHIFTING TO THIRD-COUNTRY EQUIPMENT FOR ITS ARMY (LESS SO FOR THE AIR FORCE AND NOT AT ALL FOR THE NAVY). IN SHORT, WE WERE ALREADY ON OUR WAY TO A LOWER PROFILE AND A MUCH LESS CLOSE MILITARY RELATIONSHIP, AND THE TERMINATION OF SECURITY ASSISTANCE MERELY REINFORCED THE TREND.

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11. BUT THE IMPACT OF TERMINATION GOES BEYOND OUR PURELY MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS. WHAT THE GOG VIEWS AS THE NECESSITY FOR TERMINATION - RATHER THAN SUBMIT TO AN EVALUATION BY ANOTHER GOVERNMENT OF ITS HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES - IS YET ANOTHER IN A GROWING LIST OF IRRITANTS TO OUR BROADER RELATIONS WITH GUATEMALA. THE PRESSURES TO REVISE ITS MARITIME LEGISLATION TO CONFIRM TO US CONCEPTS OF NON-DISCRIMINATION, OUR PRESSURES AGAINST ANY CONSIDERATION OF THE USE OF FORCE AGAINST BELIZE, THE GROWING RAPPROCHEMENT BETWEEN THE US AND CUBA WHICH WILL AFFECT GUATEMALAN SUGAR EXPORTS AND WHICH THEY FEAR MAY AFFECT OUR WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE IN WIPING OUT CUBAN-SUPPORTED GUERRILLAS, ARE ALL JUSTIFIABLE AND PERHAPS INEVITABLE FROM THE US POINT OF VIEW. BUT THEY HAVE ALL DISAPPOINTED A GENUINELY PRO-US GUATEMALAN GOVERNMENT, AND LED IT TO SEARCH - SO FAR RATHER HALF-HEARTEDLY - FOR A NEW ORIENTATION IN WORLD AFFAIRS, LESS CLOSELY LINKED TO THE US.

12. AS INDICATED ABOVE, IT WILL BE A NUMBER OF YEARS BEFORE A TOTALLY NON-US ORIENTED ARMY IS IN EXISTENCE, EVEN IF THE GOG OPTS FOR A SHARP AND COMPLETE TERMINATION OF US ASSISTANCE. BY THE TIME SUCH AN ARMY DEVELOPS, OTHER CHANGES MAY HAVE OCCURRED IN GUATEMALAN SOCIETY WHICH WILL HAVE LESSENED THE POLITICAL ROLE OF THE MILITARY. IF PRESIDENTS AND PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES WERE NOT CHOSEN EXCLUSIVELY FROM THE RANKS OF THE MILITARY, AND IF THE ARMED FORCES DID NOT HOLD A VETO POWER OVER EVERY SIGNIFICANT GOVERNMENT DECISION, THEN THE SOURCE OF THE ARMY'S TRAINING AND STRATEGIC THINKING WOULD BE OF MUCH LESS IMPORTANCE TO THE US

13. IN ANY EVENT, THE GOG'S RENUNCIATION OF US MILITARY ASSISTANCE MARKS THE END OF AN ERA IN MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, AND REFLECTS AGAIN THE

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DIVRGENCE IN WORL VIEW THAT HAS OCCURRED BETWEEN THEM
SINCE THE FIFTIES. IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT THE DECISIVE
MOVE TO ALTER UNEQUIVOCALLY THE RELATIONSHIP WAS FINALLY
TAKEN BY GUATEMALA, AFTER HAVING FOR ALMOST A DECADE
ACCEPTED WITHOUT SERIOUS DEMURRAL A SERIES OF UNILATERAL
US MOVES TO REDUCE AND ELIMINATE PROGRAMS AND CHANGE
THE STYLE OF THE RELATIONSHIP. THEREIN LIES THE
SIGNFICANCE OF THE MOVE. TO THE ADMITTEDLY MINOR
DEGREE THAT US INTERESTS, SECURITY AND OTHERS, ARE
CONDITIONED BY THE TYPE OF MILITARY RELATIONSHIP WE
ENJOYED WITH GUATEMALA IN THE SIXTIES, TO THAT DEGREE
PLANNERS MUST NOW REEVALUATE AND IF NECESSARY DISCOUNT
THAT FACTOR OR COMPENSATE IN OTHER WAYS.
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Message Attributes

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From: GUATEMALA
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